

DAVID W. BANDY

Bandmaster Henry Berger and the Royal Hawaiian Band

INTRODUCTION

THE HISTORY OF the Royal Hawaiian Band parallels the history of Hawai'i itself during both the 19th and 20th centuries—from an independent Monarchy, to a Republic, to an American Territory, and finally to the fiftieth state of the United States.

The role of the organization within the social, political, and educational life of the community has been evident from its earliest years. It is by forming a better understanding of past events that we are able to help to mold the events of the future. The history of the Band and its bandmasters and the outgrowth of their combined activities have formed the cornerstone upon which band music in Hawai'i has been built.

The Royal Hawaiian Band, as it is known today, did not always carry that particular title. In 1836, it was called the King's Band. Newspapers named it the King's Musicians in 1855 and the King's Band again in 1870. The musical program for Kamehameha Day on June 11, 1872 called the group His Majesty's Band, while on September 24th of that same year it was listed as the Hawaiian Military Band. In the following year of 1873 came the title of Royal Hawaiian Military Band. As major changes in government occurred during the political history of Hawai'i, so also did

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The Hawaiian Journal of History, vol. 24 (1990)

changes of the Band's name. After the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani in 1893, the Band was called the Provisional Government Band and, in 1894, the Hawaiian Band. A second band was formed by many of Henry Berger's original members in 1893 and called itself the Hawaiian National Band. This particular group toured the United States in 1895 hoping to gain support for the cause of its Queen and Hawaiian independence. It was in 1898 that the Band was renamed the Territorial Band, and on July 1, 1905, when the new system of County governments was installed, it became the Royal Hawaiian Band. Today, most people use the general title of Royal Hawaiian Band when speaking of the organization, no matter which period of time they are referring to.

Henry Berger, perhaps the best known Bandmaster of the Royal Hawaiian Band, was not, however, the first. To better understand the influence of this dynamic personality, a sample of pre-Berger history is warranted.

THE EARLY YEARS: 1836-1871

The King's Band, as it was known at the time, was formed in 1836 during the reign of King Kamehameha III. Under the leadership of an African-American known as "Oliver,"¹ it performed at many state occasions, including the funeral of Princess Nāhi'e-na'ena in 1837. The *Sandwich Island Gazette* described the event as follows: "We saw the Band ambling through the streets of this metropolis the other day, decked in gorgeous caparisons, blowing, beating, and piping a solemn air."² The paper also noted that the Band had visited California in 1836.

George Washington Hyatt became the Band's second Bandmaster in 1845. Born in 1815 in Petersburg, Virginia, Hyatt was a former slave who had escaped and made his way to Hawai'i.³ He had been a member of the original Band under Oliver, playing both the flute and clarinet. A "contract" dated May 26, 1845 states:

Know all men by these presents, that we the undersigned do agree to appoint and we do hereby appoint George Hyatt to be leader of the Band, and Charles Johnson to be Captain. . . .

For our services we are each to be paid not to exceed \$3 for a whole day \$2 for half a day and \$1 for anytime less than half a day.⁴

Hyatt remained in Honolulu following his three-year tenure as Bandmaster and lived in Hawai'i for the final 40 years of his life until his death at Queen's Hospital on March 13, 1870 at the age of 65. He was known to many within local society:

Everybody knew him as 'Black George' twenty years ago, and he was a general favorite, not only because he played on the flute and clarinet at social gatherings, but because of his amiability.⁵

Hyatt was followed by William Merseberg. Born in Weimar, Germany, he resided in Hawai'i his last 30 years, also serving as Sheriff of Kohala, Hawai'i.⁶ As director of the Band, he was salaried at \$30 a month. He promised that he would abstain "from all intoxicating drinks."⁷ At this time the Band consisted of flute, clarinet, bassoon, French horn, drums, and "other brass instruments," but only numbered ten members total. Members of the Band were both Hawaiians and foreigners. Twelve years later the same band consisted entirely of Hawaiian players.⁸

Merseberg left the Band in 1870 but remained in Hawai'i until his death on April 18, 1879, at the age of 65.⁹ He had established a family that would give Hawai'i a future Bandmaster, Robert H. Baker, and historian/*Kumu Hula* John Kaha'i Topolinski.

Late in the year 1869, an Austrian frigate, the *Donau* (Danube) arrived in the Hawaiian Islands while on a world-wide voyage. The ship remained in Honolulu for several months for repairs. It was during this time that the band of the *Donau* gave many concerts in and around Honolulu. When the repairs were complete and the ship continued on its voyage in 1870, the Hawaiian people realized how much they missed the concerts that had been given by the band. It was the people of the community, upon the departure of the Austrian ship, who actually petitioned Kamehameha V to "revitalize" his own Band.

William Northcott, a native of New Zealand, was appointed director of the "new and revitalized" King's Band in November of 1870. Even though the Band had remained together, its lack of

exposure to the community made it apparent that a new direction was needed for its future. When Kamehameha V made the royal appointment, he also gave Northcott some 26 Hawaiian boys from the Reform School to train as new band members:

It is understood and agreed that Mr. William Northcott will serve as Band Master and Instructor in music at Honolulu, for the space of six months, it being understood that from and after the expiration of six months, this agreement may be renewed, if mutually agreeable.¹⁰

Northcott was successful with the young Hawaiians, who were surprisingly apt in learning the music:

After numerous difficulties, consequent upon the wayward disposition of native youths, the members of the band are now engaged under contract on monthly wages, until they become of age. The band was out for a short time on Thursday evening practicing, and surprised those that heard them by their accurate playing. Mr. Northcott deserves great credit for the pains he has taken to mold a band of musicians out of such raw materials.¹¹

Northcott was commended for a fine job in organizing the King's Band of young Hawaiians. His effort was short-lived, however, as he could not be paid a salary on which to support himself:

We are sorry to hear that Mr. Northcott, an accomplished musician, who has with surprising toil and success brought the King's Band to its present state of efficiency, is soon to leave, as a living salary cannot be paid him. The rare opportunities that have been afforded by those controlling the movements of the band for the public to hear it have proved that it was a desirable institution, but deprived of its master, we predict for it an abbreviated existence.¹²

Northcott had spent only six months building the Band before he left Hawai'i. The "abbreviated existence" of the Band itself, noted by the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, fortunately never came to be.

Following Northcutt came another period of brief leadership, in 1871–1872, by Frank Medina. Born in Portugal, as a young man he travelled extensively, earning a living as a singer. He arrived in Hawai‘i with a singing group called “Brook’s Minstrels.” After some thought, he decided to stay in the Islands in order to direct the Band. The Band seemed to be fairly active during Medina’s tenure, in spite of the unstable leadership it had experienced during its earlier years. The Band played during Queen Kapi‘olani’s evening sails around the harbor and at the sailing of a German steamer about to depart for its home port:

The Hawaiian Band marched down, and played “The Watch on the Rhine,” for the benefit of some of our German friends who go to revisit Faderland.¹³

Medina left after a year of service. Due to heavy debts, he cleverly disguised himself as a Negro and departed Honolulu for the Mainland on the *Nebraska*.

Longevity of leadership was soon to arrive with the appearance of a man who would not only change the Band, but Hawaiian music in general. That man was Henry Berger.

THE BERGER ERA: 1872–1929

Heinrich (known later as Henry) Wilhelm Berger was born in the town of Potsdam, Prussia (now located in East Germany) on August 4, 1844. The son of Wilhelm and Augusta Berger, Henry attended the public schools of Coswig, Duchy of Anhalt, Germany. His music studies took him to Treuenbrietzen, Germany. At the age of 14 he was apprenticed to the music master in Breslau, Poland for three years. At the age of 17 he entered the Prussian army as a musician (tuba and double bass), thus also entering the Conservatory of Military Music in Berlin, where he remained between the ages of 17 and 20. Upon leaving the Conservatory, he played with orchestras led by the younger Johann Strauss (the “Waltz King”) in Paris, Vienna, and Berlin. Berger held the rank of “musician-medical corpsman.” It was this assignment that led to his participation in the Prussian wars

against Denmark (1864), Austria (1866), and France (1870-1871). In 1871, he was appointed the leader of the band of the 2nd Life Guards of Kaiser Wilhelm. At the request of King Kamehameha V to Kaiser Wilhelm for someone to teach and conduct His Hawaiian Majesty's Band, Berger was chosen to go to Honolulu in 1872.¹⁷ Officially on leave from the Prussian army, he took passage on the steamer *Mohongo* and arrived in Honolulu on June 3.¹⁸ Berger's original contract from the Prussian government was for four years. He returned to his homeland in 1876, remaining only for six months before once again returning to Honolulu in order to resume his position with the Band in 1877.¹⁹

Aside from his activities with His Hawaiian Majesty's Band, Berger was important to the development and growth of much of Hawai'i's musical life. In the 1870s, he organized the Industrial School Band, which later became known as the Waiale'e Reform School Band, and conducted this group until the early 1920s. In 1893, the Kamehameha Schools employed Mr. Berger to enlarge their music department. He remained with the Schools until 1903.²⁰ During this decade he began a band for the Boys School and also supervised the singing teachers in the Girls School. In addition to his duties at the Kamehameha Schools, he accepted duties at Kawaiaha'o Girls' Seminary and at the former Territorial Normal School. Berger was the organist at Kawaiaha'o Church for 14 years, often alternating Sundays with Queen Lili'uokalani who was a fine organist. He played, too, for the Honolulu Elks Club²¹ from its 1901 founding until 1928. Henry Berger was the original conductor of the small ensemble which would eventually become the Honolulu Symphony, as well as conductor of the orchestras of both the Methodist Church and the Korean Christian Church in the 1920s.

Composer, Arranger and Publisher

Henry Berger was one of the first, other than the missionaries who printed *himeni* (hymns), to have published collections of secular Hawaiian songs with notation, producing more than 100 "original" compositions and arrangements, many being Native

Hawaiian tunes Berger heard sung by the local population. Many of these arrangements were for piano and voice, but some were for bands and orchestras. Berger published a number of series and collections of songs, including *Mele Hawaii* and the *Royal Collection of Hawaiian Songs*.²²

There have been few individuals who have had more impact on Hawaiian music than Henry Berger, so much so that on Berger's 70th birthday in 1914, Queen Lili'uokalani bestowed upon him the title of "Father of Hawaiian Music" and asked the people of Hawai'i always to remember and celebrate Berger's birthday. He had survived the fall of the Monarchy and the annexation to the United States, becoming a naturalized Hawaiian subject himself in 1879 and eventually an American citizen. During his tenure as the Royal Hawaiian Bandmaster, he conducted more than 32,000 band concerts.

Berger's influence on Hawaiian music is still felt today. Some of his most famous compositions include "Hawai'i Pono'i" (originally titled "Hymn of Kamehameha I," the words written by David Kalākaua), "Kō Leo," and "Lā Hānau O Ka Mō'i." He also published arrangements of well-known Hawaiian songs such as "Sweet Lei Lehua" by Kalākaua, "Ua Like No A Like" by Alice Everett, and "Aloha Oe" by Queen Lili'uokalani.²³

The Tours of 1905 and 1906

Following annexation to the United States in 1898, those in political power were quick to promote all that Hawai'i had to offer the world. One of the most popular and unique qualities of the new Territory was its music, and, of course, one of the most visible factors was the Band. Two Mainland tours, the first in 1905, followed by a second in 1906, offered to those on the Mainland an opportunity to see and experience this place called Hawai'i through the sounds of the Royal Hawaiian Band and its associated Glee Club.

Portland, Oregon hosted the 1905 Lewis and Clarke Exposition where the Royal Hawaiian Band was to play first. J. C. Cohen, a Honolulu capitalist originally from Buffalo, New York, decided the Band was worth the financial risk of an extended stay in the

Portland area.²⁴ The four week engagement paid off, as the Band was received with great acclaim at every concert from the first day.²⁵ A review of the Band's opening performance rendered the following:

In a picturesque, unusual [*sic*] class all by itself, the Royal Hawaiian band, from Honolulu, of 33 members, has stepped into the limelight, and made good. The dusky-skinned musicians made their first bow to a Portland audience at the Exposition yesterday afternoon. . . . Enthusiastic crowds hung around the bandstand all the time the Hawaiians played and sang, and applause was generous.²⁶

Cohen sent a number of stories from the Oregon newspapers home for those in Honolulu to read. An article in the *Oregon Journal*, reprinted in the *Hawaiian Gazette*, stated:

Talk about versatility!

The most remarkable organization in the world, in that respect, must be the Royal Hawaiian band, which began an engagement of three weeks at the Lewis and Clarke Exposition yesterday afternoon before hundreds who had not heretofore found interest in music at the fair. . . .

People can hear a brass band any day—but they cannot hear music like this more than once in a lifetime.²⁷

Both the *Oregon Daily Journal* and the *Oregonian* ran regular schedules of the Exposition's events, listing in advance the Band's daily repertoire. It is interesting to note that few of the selections during the three-week engagement were repeated, evidence of the Band's vast repertoire at this time. Another interesting point is that the Hawaiian selections were largely limited to the vocal solos and to selections performed by the Glee Club. "Hawai'i Pono'i" and perhaps a march or two, written by Berger (with Hawaiian titles), were the only Hawaiian songs played by the Band itself. It was, however, this diversity which greatly added to the popularity of the organization. One of the highlights of each concert was not only the singing of the Glee Club, but also that of the Band's solo soprano vocalist, Madame Nani Alapa'i:

Madame Nane [*sic*] Alapai, the soprano of the Royal Hawaiian band, whose singing of native songs has been the musical sensation of the fair, has never had a music lesson in her life. . . . Her voice is naturally sweet and her talent distinctively native. She is ambitious for operatic work, and there is just a prospect that she may lead a native opera company in Honolulu within a short time.²⁸

The *Hawaiian Gazette* carried a letter, dated August 25, 1905, from J. C. Cohen to the citizens of Honolulu regarding the Band's initial reception in Portland and expressed the strong value to the people of Hawai'i of the social and political benefits of the Band's travel:

By this time you are no doubt aware of the band's great success in San Francisco, and I am pleased to be able to report that this same success is meeting us here.

We opened at the fair yesterday and I am really amazed at the furor we have created. . . . We are certainly drawing attention to Hawaii. All the papers are devoting considerable space to us and I can unload all of the stories that I have in stock. This will mean that by virtue of the band thousands upon thousands will have their attention drawn to Hawaii. It is the kind of advertising that advertises, and I believe you will soon feel the effects.²⁹

Indeed Cohen was correct on all counts. The local newspapers were filled with stories of Hawai'i and of the Band's itinerary. Merchants advertised Hawaiian sugar and even offered a contest for a trip to the Islands. But perhaps the largest promotional boost came from the *Oregon Daily Journal* itself.³⁰ The paper offered to send "the eight most eligible young ladies" within the state of Oregon to Hawai'i for a stay and to be greeted and entertained in Hawai'i by the Royal Hawaiian Band.³¹

Visitors continued to flock to the Band's concerts until the farewell performance on Sunday, September 17, which drew the largest attendance of the fair, numbering 2,000. The following comments appeared in the next morning's edition of the *Oregonian*:

The audiences for the two concerts were particularly enthusiastic and the band was obliged to render encore after encore. The glee

club received a tremendous ovation at the two concerts, and was called back again and again by the heavy applause. . . . both of the last two concerts ended by the band playing 'The Star Spangled Banner.'

All the members of the band have become deeply attached to Portland and the Exposition since they have been here and would like to remain the entire season. The regret over their departure is shared equally with the Hawaiians by the music-loving public of Portland, which has been greatly pleased with the band. Whether the days or nights were rainy or cool, the band has always played to large crowds.³²

It was the great success of the 1905 tour that led Mr. Cohen and Mr. Berger, with the permission of the Hawaiian Government, into their most demanding of all tours to this date—the tour of 1906.

Following a farewell concert on the Capitol grounds,³³ the enlarged Royal Hawaiian Band of 42 instrumentalists and new soprano soloist³⁴ (fig. 1) boarded S. the S. S. *Korea* on May 23, 1906.³⁵ As a last minute decision, Madame Alapa'i decided not to participate in the tour as her husband could not travel with the Band. Miss Lei Lehua, who had recently joined the Band, would be the featured Prima Donna.³⁶ Before returning to Hawai'i, they would visit towns and cities in states that would include California, Oregon, Washington, Montana, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Kentucky, and Missouri, and Canada. It was to be a hard, grueling tour with many difficulties, but it would also bring much attention to the Hawaiian Islands from many sections of the United States. This was an opportunity for massive exposure. Upon arrival in San Francisco, additional musicians were added to the Band from the local Musician's Union, bringing their membership to more than 60 strong.³⁷

Their first concerts were at the famous Greek Theatre on the campus of the University of California at Berkeley (fig. 2), a monumental new arena when the Royal Hawaiian Band opened a week-long engagement there beginning May 29, 1906. Billed as a benefit for relief funds for the great San Francisco earthquake disaster six weeks earlier, the price of admission was a whopping 50 cents per chair and 25 cents for unreserved seats. An announce-

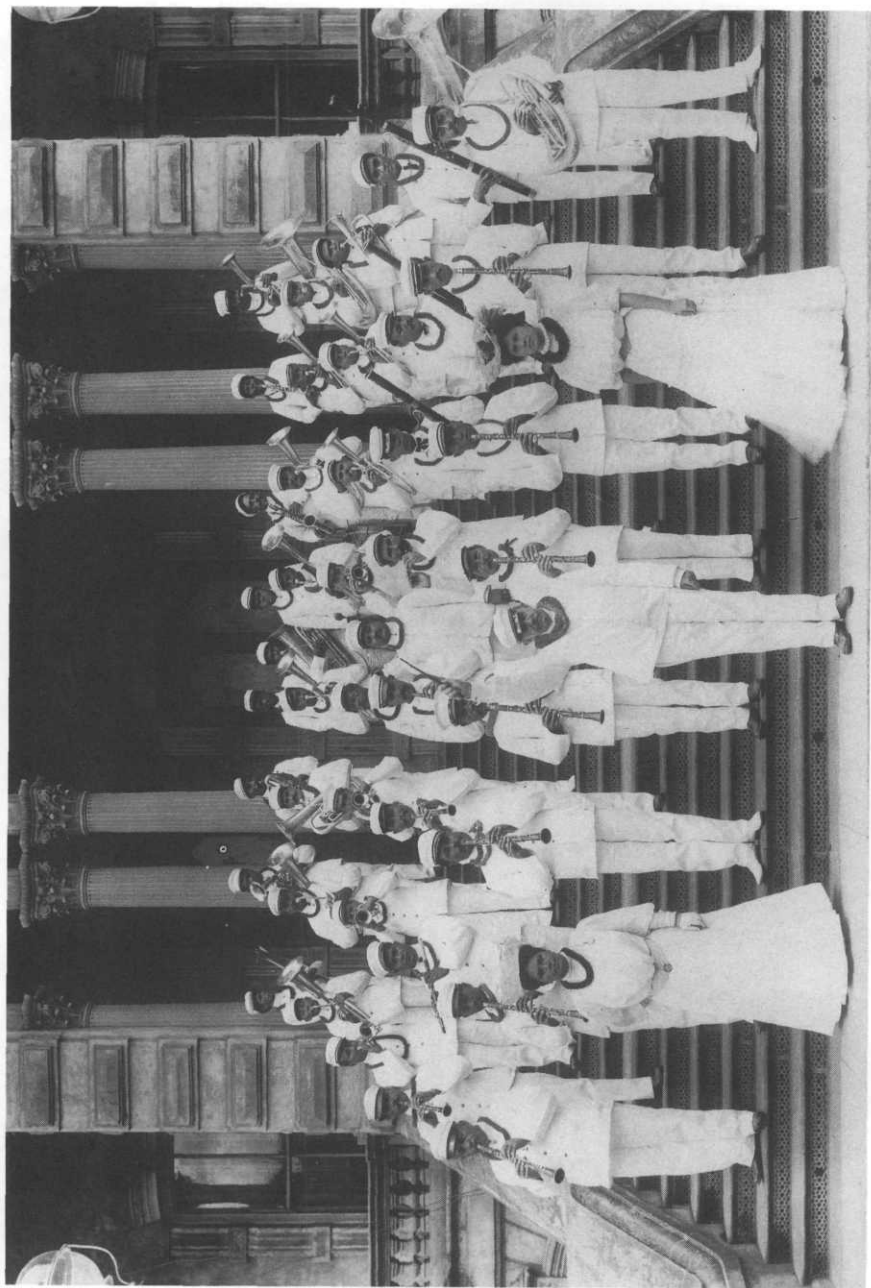


FIG. 1. The enlarged Royal Hawaiian Band on the steps of Iolani Palace prior to departure for the Mainland in 1906. Front row (left to right): Nani Alapai, Henry Berger, and Lei Lehua. (AH photo.)

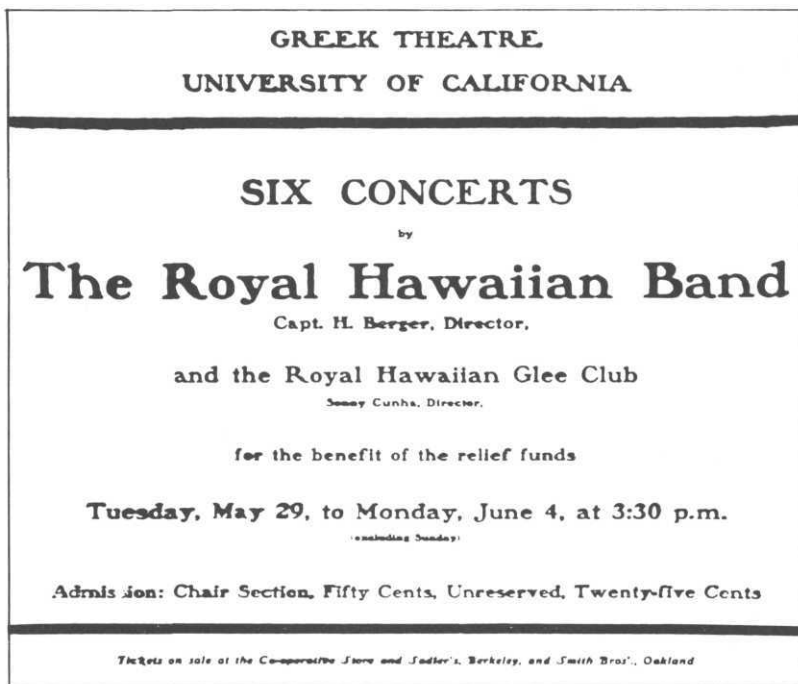


FIG. 2. Concert poster University of California Berkeley, 1906. (University Archives, Bancroft Library photo.)

ment distributed by the University's Musical and Dramatic Committee stated:

This is the genuine Hawaiian Government band, whose playing has delighted every visitor to the islands, and whose three weeks' engagement at the Portland Exposition was so notably successful. . . . it is not only a brass band but also an orchestra and a glee club, the second part of the programme consisting of Hawaiian songs accompanied by their characteristic stringed instruments.³⁸

Again, the programs were varied, with a large variety of instrumental and vocal offerings ranging from "King Cotton March," "Italien in Algiers," "Il Trovatore," and "El Capitan," to "Molokama," "Lipolipo," "Akahi Ho'i," and "Moloka'i Makai."³⁹

The Band gave five performances between June 10 and 12 at the Seattle Theatre in Washington (fig. 3). The Seattle Daily Times commented favorably following the Band's opening performance:

SEATTLE JOHN CORT, Manager
43 BORN PHONES 43

TONIGHT, TOMORROW AND TUESDAY NIGHTS MATINEES MONDAY TUESDAY

**60 MUSICIANS
AND SINGERS**

Recreating Popular Music and
the famous
"Hula Songs of Hawaii"

ROYAL HAWAIIAN BAND WORLD-RENOVED
FROM HONOLULU
By Permission of the
Government of Hawaii

PRICES \$1 00 75c 50c and 25c MATINEES 75c, 50c and 25c

WEDNESDAY TO SATURDAY - SATURDAY MATINEE

MACK SWAIN
THEATRE COMPANY IN

"THE WORLD"

THE THRILLING MELODRAMA
A BIG SCENIC PRODUCTION

PRICES 30c, 20c and 10c FEW FRONT SEATS 50c

FIG. 3. Seattle, Washington newspaper ad, 1906, announcing the Band's appearance. (Seattle Public Library photo.)

At the Seattle last night—before a large and appreciative audience a new band was introduced to local music lovers—the Royal Hawaiian organization from Honolulu. . . . these Sandwich Islanders prove a highly acceptable change, proving adequate to not only general military band requirements, but skilled as well in the native island music that possesses an indescribable charm for white folks.

Seattle's increasing trade relations with Honolulu has apparently stimulated the friendly feeling which has always existed between the two cities, and the audience last night took occasion to demonstrate this bond of friendship by unusually liberal applause and by closer attention than is generally given a musical program.⁴⁰

From Seattle, the Band crossed the border to perform in Vancouver, British Columbia. Playing to a standing-room-only audience at the Opera House, they proved to be “equally at home at any class of music—from classical to rag-time.”⁴¹

Logan, Utah hosted the Band next, courtesy of Mr. F. A. Mitchells. Mitchells was Secretary of the Logan Cache Commercial Club and had previously served as President of the Hawaiian Missions for the Mormon Church on O‘ahu.⁴² Logan’s Thatcher Opera House proved to be an amiable auditorium for the Band, as they were billed “the greatest novelty in many years,” rendering “classical and operatic music and the superb native music and ‘hula’ songs.”⁴³

The first two weeks of August saw the “band boys” performing at the prestigious Fontaine Ferry Park in Louisville, Kentucky (fig. 4). The *Louisville Evening Post* ran a small article announcing the Band’s opening performances:

Fontaine Ferry Park’s star offering of the season up to this time is promised for one week, commencing with Sunday, August 12. The Royal Hawaiian Band has been engaged for a series of free concerts each afternoon and evening of the week. . . . The band is travelling under the patronage of the Hawaiian government. It is one of the most expensive attractions ever booked for park entertainment.⁴⁴

That same day, the rival *Louisville Herald* wrote of the Band, “It is declared that no band of equal attractiveness has heretofore appeared in American cities.”⁴⁵ Billed as a “star offering,” the management of the park capitalized on the fact that it had secured “the most stupendous act in years,” offering to the patrons of the park two free concerts each day.⁴⁶ Louisville also ended up being the farthest east that the Band would travel before heading back toward the Pacific Ocean. For the first time Cohen contributed some “new” information: “The present tour is made under the auspices of the Hawaiian Government and the commercial bodies of Honolulu.”⁴⁷ The trade and tourism of the new Territory were to become of prime interest to all those concerned with this and all future tours. The pattern had been established.

FONTAINE FERRY PARK

"THE PARK BEAUTIFUL."
WEEK BEGINNING TOMORROW.
FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE WORLD FAMOUS

ROYAL HAWAIIAN BAND

FROM HONOLULU.
BY PERMISSION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF HAWAII.
SIXTY MUSICIANS AND SINGERS
 A Military Band, a Stringed Orchestra, a Choir, Mandolin, Guitar and
 Banjo Clubs and Solo Singers, Rendering
VARIED PROGRAMS OF POPULAR, CLASSICAL, AND OPERATIC
MUSIC.
AND THE SUPERB
NATIVE MUSIC AND "HULA" SONGS
OF HAWAII.
CAPTAIN H. BERGER, FOUNDER AND LEADER.

HIGH - CLASS VAUDEVILLE
JOLLY FANNY RICE
PALFREY AND MOEFLER. MR. AND MRS. WATERBROS. KINEDROME. AVON COMEDY FOUR. FOX & FOXIE.

IDEAL ROLLER RINK
FINEST SURFACE IN THE SOUTH—TWO SESSIONS DAILY.
PARK ADMISSION 10c. CHILDREN, Accompanied by Parents, Free.

FIG. 4. Newspaper ad for the Band's appearance in Louisville, Kentucky, 1906. (Louisville Free Public Library photo.)

Finishing two weeks in Kentucky, it was now time for the Band to begin the long trip home, with concerts along the way. The *St. Louis Republic*, reviewing a performance of the Band at the Forest Park Highlands, stated:

In the Royal Hawaiian Band and Glee Club, touring the country by permission of the Hawaiian and United States Government,

Colonel Hopkins has secured the best attraction of the season at Forest Park Highlands. The Hawaiians are musicians. They play and sing for sheer love of their art and they throw into their music a verve and vigor often lacking in professional organizations . . . and the taropatch.⁴⁸

Although the Band was in fact slowly returning home, the delay seemed puzzling to those waiting for them in Honolulu. Some concert cities had been omitted, while others were added. Soon letters arrived from members of the Band that reflected a less rosy picture than had appeared in newspaper accounts. Band members wrote of not being paid properly while travelling or not being paid at all. One member wrote home from Omaha saying that problems had existed over salaries almost as long as the Band had been on tour, with sometimes only \$11 a month given out, and, lately, no money at all.⁴⁹ Stories reached the Islands of band members travelling on trains all night, having to sit up all night instead of having sleeper rooms, and, in one incident, of almost being suffocated by smoke while passing through an extended tunnel.⁵⁰ Letters also described the situation of Mr. Cohen in relationship to the Band. Finally, on October 29, William Ayllet, a member of the Band returned home on the S. S. *Alameda* with a letter from Henry Berger to G. W. Smith, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors:

Dear Sir: Mr. R. W. Aylett is going home and will present this letter to you.

Mr. Cohen is dead broke; he can't take the band home; he has no reserve fund. We live merely from hand to mouth. We are travelling around the country aimlessly to make board and lodging.

Cohen hasn't paid salaries for the last two months, and somebody [*sic*] not even for four months, except a little spending money. The boys are hard up and they're very anxious about their families in Honolulu, as they have not received any money for two months. . . .

I trust that the whole of Honolulu will treat us fair. We have done our best and worked for your benefit and for all. All the boys send Aloha.

Yours with thousand thanks, Captain H. Berger⁵¹

The Honolulu community was stunned. Some evidence emerged that Cohen may have mismanaged funds. It is possible that regardless of what prices were charged for tickets that these did not cover expenses. Plans were promptly formulated to help raise funds in order to secure passage home for the Band. The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* kept the community informed as to the situation:

Poor old band!

The organization left here in khaki clothing and, a little later, acquired suits of duck. This was six months ago. Business has been poor and the band, still clad in summer clothes but assailed by winter weather, is trying to get across from Utah to San Francisco. It is playing in little towns to eke out carfare and subsistence, is sleeping in car-chairs and has had no pay for a long time. There is danger that, for lack of warm clothing in a severe climate, some of the members will succumb to pneumonia.

The band is our own and there is authority for speaking in very censorious terms of the man who won't care for his own.

Let us help the band speedily. Let us send a man with money to look the organization up and provide for it according to its needs.⁵²

The citizens of Honolulu immediately joined together and raised the needed money in order to bring the Band home.⁵³ All the while, Cohen continued to arrange performances in order to feed and house the group. These included performances in Omaha, Nebraska and Ogden, Utah. On November 20, 1906, once again aboard the *S. S. Korea*, the Royal Hawaiian Band sailed for home.⁵⁴

Post Tour: 1907-1929

The Band remained in the Territory for the rest of Berger's tenure as Bandmaster. In fact, it would be over 70 years before the Royal Hawaiian Band would once again travel away from the Islands. Meanwhile, the Band kept busy at home.

Tourism was beginning to increase rapidly in the Territory, and the Band was always at the piers on "Boat Day" to greet each passenger ship arriving in Honolulu. Berger continued to de-

mand the best from his boys, gaining even more respect from the community each day. A note in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* in 1909 suggests the longevity of Berger's popularity:

Captain Berger might very appropriately set his bandmen to practising [sic] on the musical setting to Tennyson's *Brook*, the words in the refrain of which are 'For men may come and men may go, but I go on forever.'⁵⁵

On January 4, 1909, officers of the newly created City and County of Honolulu took their oaths. Joseph James Fern, a native of Kohala, served as the first Mayor of Honolulu, and the newly-dubbed City and County Band played a specially-composed march dedicated to the new mayor.⁵⁶

In 1912, Berger made plans for a final visit back to his European homeland. On May 24, the Honolulu Commercial Club honored Captain Berger with their largest luncheon to date. Colonel Curtis Pi'ehu 'Iaukea spoke briefly on behalf of former Queen Lili'uokalani, whom he had just visited prior to the luncheon:

There were tears in her eyes when she asked that I wish him bon voyage on his well-earned vacation and rest. I was directed to convey her most gracious aloha and wishes that he have a pleasant visit and come back well.⁵⁷

Berger departed in early June, taking with him a variety of photographs and gifts from the people of Hawai'i to Emperor Wilhelm II.⁵⁸ In Germany, he visited family and friends and was presented a gold medal from the Emperor for his musical work in Hawai'i.⁵⁹

Although Berger was officially retired on his return to Hawai'i, he continued to remain in the news and continued to follow the efforts of his band boys. June 2, 1922 marked the 50th anniversary of Berger's arrival in Honolulu. The *Honolulu Advertiser* ran a front page story and special interview with Berger asking how he felt about his life and his contributions to Hawai'i. He was quick to credit the Hawaiians themselves as a musical people, saying that he was the fortunate one in being allowed to guide and teach them. His belief in musical education was clear:

In the state of world affairs and general unrest, I think music can do a great deal to calm humanity—bring it back again, to love humanity in entire state, practical universal brotherhood and sisterhood, and try to make all peoples happy again. Do it with music and song . . . I teach every week about 200 children music and song. . . . I hope to teach my juveniles more and more to love and to make music. Then in the rising generation lays the future. Particularly there should be more music in the schools; put it in the curriculum; don't treat it like an orphan; make children love music, even if they don't practice it.⁶⁰

Retirement in 1915 allowed Berger time to work with more and more children, passing on his love of music to a new generation. Many of these children would continue this same process just as the master would have hoped. His retirement also gave him time to listen to music and play his piano, even though he had become totally blind. On August 4, 1929, Henry Berger turned 85. It would be his last birthday. An *Advertiser* reporter summarized Berger's life perfectly in a single sentence:

If everyone could watch life's sun set with so much peace, so much understanding and with so keen a mind, old age would hold no terrors.⁶¹

On October 1, Berger became very ill. Fighter that he was, he seemed to be on the road to recovery when he suffered a serious relapse. He gradually weakened.⁶² Berger died on October 14, 1929, of a lung ailment due to a bout with pneumonia, at the age of 85.⁶³

The funeral services were held at Central Union Church, and hundreds of friends and admirers attended. Even Mainland newspapers noted his death. The *San Francisco Chronicle* bid a fond farewell to the Captain:

With the death in Honolulu of Henry Berger, there passes one who more than any other individual is responsible for the picture of Hawaii that exists in the popular mind. For it was Berger who originated the Hawaiian custom of welcoming the coming, speeding the parting guest with music. And if he did not actually invent

Hawaiian music as we know it today, it was his genius that organized and preserved it.⁶⁴

CONCLUSION

Henry Berger conducted the Royal Hawaiian Band for more than 43 years. He served during the reigns of Kings Kamehameha V, Lunalilo, and Kalākaua, and Queen Lili'uokalani, as well as the administration of the new Republic of Hawai'i's President Sanford B. Dole, and several governors of the Territory. He knew that his responsibility was to provide the best possible musical experience for his beloved Hawai'i *Nei*. Captain Henry Berger now rests at the cemetery of Kawaiaha'o Church. His beloved home at 1820 Anapuni Street, where he spent his last years of leisure, is now gone, replaced by an apartment complex, but his spirit and his music will continue to survive.

The Band also continues to serve the people of Hawai'i today by preserving the precious past under the direction of Hawaiian Bandmaster Aaron David Mahi. Its importance in the musical life of Honolulu has not diminished, but rather has increased in this fast-paced age. Bandmaster Mahi has brought the Band to new heights of sound musicianship and performance, fostering a rebirth of Hawaiian pride for their Royal Band.

This pride was readily observable during a 1988 tour to the Mainland United States where the Band performed to packed houses in Milwaukee, Chicago, and New York City. It was in New York, on July 16, 1988 that another historic event occurred when the Band performed at the celebrated Carnegie Hall. Hawaiians and lovers of Hawaiian music from all parts of the country attended this very special concert where the Band again showed its musical diversity by performing a repertoire that ranged from Mozart's Flute Concerto in D Major to the ancient hula "Kaulilua I ke Anu Wai'ale'ale." The Band's efforts were rewarded with a thunderous standing ovation.

The most recent tour abroad occurred in the summer of 1989. The Band travelled to Japan for the first time in its history and gave a number of concerts in Hiroshima as part of that city's 30th Anniversary Sister City Festival. The concerts were so successful

that plans are now under way for another Japan tour, this time to Osaka, to perform at Japan's National Exposition.

The Royal Hawaiian Band has existed through a century and a half of change. It is still flourishing and treasured.

NOTES

- ¹ *HA*, 7 May 1949.
- ² *SIG*, 4 Feb. 1837.
- ³ *HA*, 23 Feb. 1940.
- ⁴ Handwritten contract signed by members of the Band and government officials, 26 May, 1845, FO & EX, AH.
- ⁵ *HA*, 23 Feb. 1940.
- ⁶ John R. Kaha'i Topolinski, historian and descendent of William Merseburgh, personal interview, Honolulu, 21 May 1988.
- ⁷ 23 Mar. 1848, FO & EX, AH.
- ⁸ *PCA*, 27 Feb. 1864.
- ⁹ *F*, May 1879.
- ¹⁰ 8 Aug. 1870, FO & EX, AH.
- ¹¹ *PCA*, 7 Jan. 1871.
- ¹² *PCA*, 12 Aug. 1871.
- ¹³ *PCA*, 6 May 1871.
- ¹⁴ *HAA* 1866: 59.
- ¹⁵ Donald Billam-Walker, "Berger, Kapena (Captain) Henry ne Heinrich Wilhelm," in George S. Kanahale, ed., *Hawaiian Music and Musicians* (Honolulu: U P of Hawaii, 1979) 34.
- ¹⁶ Donald Billam-Walker, "Henry Berger, The Father of Hawaiian Music," ms. in Billam-Walker family papers, Honolulu.
- ¹⁷ *PCA*, 3 Dec. 1897.
- ¹⁸ *PCA*, 5 June 1872.
- ¹⁹ *PCA*, 4 Aug. 1894.
- ²⁰ *PP*, Sept. 1926: 8.
- ²¹ George F. Nellist, ed., *The Story of Hawaii and Its Builders* (Honolulu: HSB, 1925) 269.
- ²² *Mele Hawaii* is a collection of 30 songs, originally issued as single sheets, printed by the Hawaiian News Co. (1898); *Royal Collection of Hawaiian Songs* was also printed by the Hawaiian News Co. (1907), reprinted (1915), and an enlarged edition published by Johnny Noble (1929): see Amy K. Stillman, "Published Hawaiian Songbooks, *Music Library Association Notes* 44 (1987): 235-38.
- ²³ *HSB*, 24 July 1944.
- ²⁴ *Oregon Daily Journal*, 24 Aug. 1905; *Morning Oregonian*, 25 Aug. 1905.
- ²⁵ A large number of Mainland newspapers were used for data regarding the Band's visit to the Mainland U. S. and Canada during this period. Many arti-

- cles were quite lengthy, while others simply listed the repertoire of the Band's performance on any given day.
- ²⁶ *Morning Oregonian*, 25 Aug. 1905.
 - ²⁷ *HG*, 8 Sept. 1905.
 - ²⁸ *Oregon Daily Journal*, 16 Sept. 1905.
 - ²⁹ *HG*, 8 Sept. 1905.
 - ³⁰ *Oregon Daily Journal*, 14 Sept. 1905. The newspaper did not explain "eligibility."
 - ³¹ *Oregon Daily Journal*, 14 Sept. 1905.
 - ³² *Morning Oregonian*, 18 Sept. 1905.
 - ³³ *PCA*, 21 May 1906.
 - ³⁴ *PCA*, 18 Mar. 1906.
 - ³⁵ *PCA*, 23 May 1906.
 - ³⁶ *PCA*, 23 May 1906.
 - ³⁷ *PCA*, 23 May 1906.
 - ³⁸ *The Royal Hawaiian Band* (Berkeley, CA: University Musical and Dramatic Committee, 1906) 1.
 - ³⁹ Press release, University of California, Berkeley, May 1906.
 - ⁴⁰ *Seattle Daily Times*, 11 June 1906.
 - ⁴¹ *Vancouver News-Advertiser*, 15 June 1906.
 - ⁴² *Logan City (Utah) Journal*, 28 June 1906.
 - ⁴³ *Logan City (Utah) Journal*, 28 June 1906.
 - ⁴⁴ *Louisville Evening Post*, 5 Aug. 1906.
 - ⁴⁵ *Louisville Herald*, 12 Aug. 1906.
 - ⁴⁶ *Louisville Herald*, 12 Aug. 1906.
 - ⁴⁷ *Louisville Courier-Journal*, 12 Aug. 1906.
 - ⁴⁸ *St. Louis Republic*, 20 Aug. 1906.
 - ⁴⁹ *PCA*, 30 Sept. 1906.
 - ⁵⁰ *PCA*, 8 Sept. 1906.
 - ⁵¹ *PCA*, 20 Oct. 1906.
 - ⁵² *PCA*, 8 Nov. 1906.
 - ⁵³ *PCA*, 21 Oct. 1906.
 - ⁵⁴ *PCA*, 21 Nov. 1906.
 - ⁵⁵ *PCA*, 4 Jan. 1909.
 - ⁵⁶ Donald D. Johnson, "Joseph James Fern, Honolulu's First Mayor," *HJH* 9 (1975): 74.
 - ⁵⁷ *HG*, 28 May 1912.
 - ⁵⁸ *HG*, 31 May 1912.
 - ⁵⁹ Niklaus R. Schweizer, *Hawai'i and the German Speaking Peoples* (Honolulu: Topgallant, 1982) 159.
 - ⁶⁰ *HA*, 2 June 1922.
 - ⁶¹ *HA*, 4 Aug. 1929.
 - ⁶² *HSB* 14 Oct. 1929.
 - ⁶³ *HSB*, 15 Oct. 1929.
 - ⁶⁴ *San Francisco Chronicle*, rpt. *HA*, 7 Nov. 1929.
 - ⁶⁵ *HA*, 22 Jan. 1929.